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Donald L. Rheem Elementary School students get hot lunch on Aug. 12.

Photo Sora O'Doherty

Rolling out universal meal service at schools has joys and disappointments

By Sora O'Doherty

As Lamorinda kids went back to school in August, social media erupted in a barrage of comments. While parents were concerned, there was largely a tone of understanding, as Lamorinda schools began to roll out the universal meal program adopted by the State of California. With the beginning of this school year, California became the first state in the nation to implement a statewide Universal Meals Program for school children. California's Universal Meals Program is designed to build on the foundations of the federal National School Lunch Program

(NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

The new California program requires that all students be offered breakfast and lunch at school. According to Lafayette School District Superintendent Brent Stephens, schools have a choice about whether or not to sign on to the federal program, which comes with particular requirements, but schools that do not sign on to the federal program will not receive funding from the state, while still being required to meet the new state requirements on meals. Thus, for Lamorinda schools, which already face tight funding, there really is no choice but to sign up for the federal program. Having done so, each school will receive reimbursement for each

meal served.

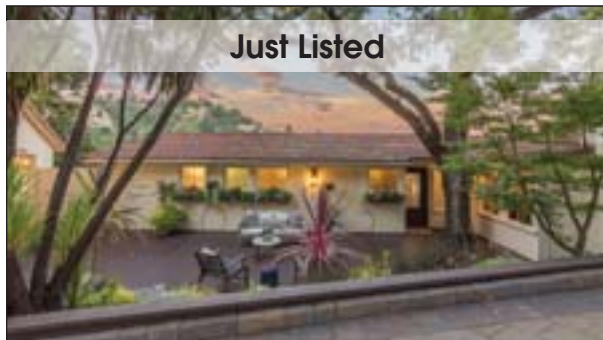
All three Lamorinda school districts, Orinda, Moraga and Lafayette, chose Sodexo food service after a bidding process last spring. Lamorinda schools face unique challenges, as many local schools do not have full kitchen facilities. The roll-out was somewhat uneven, with Moraga apparently doing better than Lafayette or Orinda. Stephens acknowledged this, and explained some of the problems the district experienced during the first week of meal service. "Up to day one," he said, "it looked like most of our planning was solid. But on day one, we encountered problems."

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Lamorinda elections begin to take shape



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By Sora O'Doherty

As the first period for candidates to file to run for office closed on Aug. 12, a number of incumbents in Lamorinda chose not to run again. This reopens the nomination period until Aug. 17 for non-incumbents to decide to run. Most local government bodies have staggered terms so that at no time is the entire body up for reelection.

In Orinda, three city council incumbents are at the end of their terms, but have decided not to run again: Amy Worth, first elected in 1998, and Dennis Fay and Nick Kosla, elected in 2018. Fay and Kosla

both served one term. Worth has served six terms, totaling 24 years, and has served as mayor a historic five times. This is the second time in the history of Orinda when three sitting council members have decided not to run for reelection. The last time was in 1994 when Bill Dabel, Bobbie Landers, and Aldo Guidotti did not run and Sargent Littlehale, Allan Tabor, and Laura Abrams were elected.

Nomination papers have been issued by Orinda to a large field of candidates. When the Lamorinda Weekly went to print, the following candidates were pending: Brandyn Iverson, Mat Fogarty, Latika Malkani, Alex Drexel, Janet Riley, and Sunil Rajaraman.

There are also three incumbents on the Orinda Union School Board whose terms are ending at the end of 2022, Carol Brown, Jason Kaune, and Liz Daoust. All three incumbents on the OUSD Board have announced that they will not be running for reelection. At this time, four candidates have pulled nomination papers: Edda Marie Collins-Coleman, Eve Marie Phillips, Michelle Lin Chang, and Mary Kateri Shogan.

All three Lafayette City Council incumbents whose terms end in 2022, Susan Candell and Teresa Gerlinger, and Wei-Tai Kwok, filed nomination papers by the Aug. 12 deadline. No other candidates had filed.

Seven candidates for the Lafayette School Board filed papers, including incumbents Rob Sturm and

Dave Smith. The non-incumbent candidates at this time are Katy Foreman, Niels Larsen, Robb Mcsorley, Sarah Elizabeth Lind, and Stephen Phillip Bosse. Incumbent Jean Follmer did not file papers.

With three terms expiring on the Moraga Town Council, only Steve Woehleke had filed for reelection by the Aug. 12 deadline. The other two incumbents whose terms are expiring are Sona Makker, and Mike McCluer. The only non-incumbent candidate to have filed paperwork was Kerry Hillis.

On the Moraga School Board, there are also three incumbents whose terms expire at the end of the year, but only Larry Jacobs filed papers by the deadline. Incumbents Heather Davis and Jon Nickens did not, but three additional candidates did file: Martha A. White, Henry Simon Nicholas King, and Kristin Kraetsch.

Two of the three incumbents on the Acalanes Union High School Board filed papers: Nancy Kendzierski and Christopher Severson. Bob Hockett did not file, but an additional five candidates did: Jennifer Chen, Mark Woolway, Renee Nowac, Clayton Gardner and Gabriel Morris Ledeen.

Terms of three of the five Moraga-Orinda Fire District governing board incumbents expire at the end of 2022, but only two are running for reelection.

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